

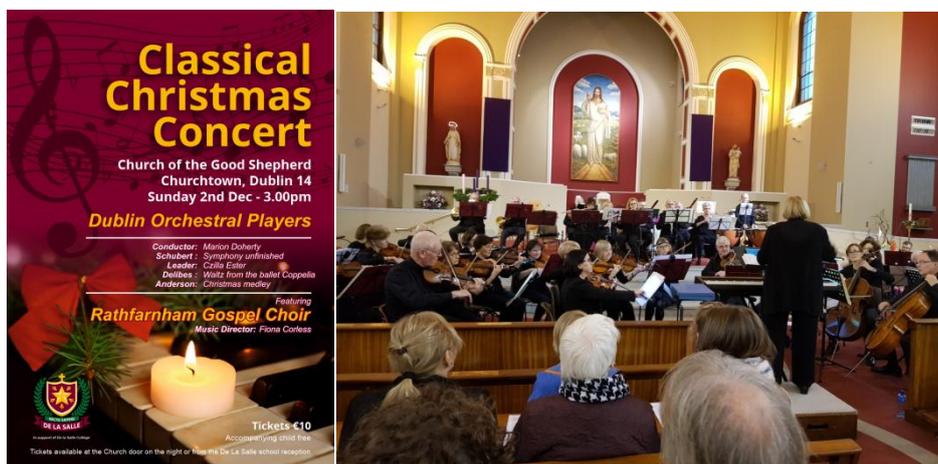
Christmas Newsletter from the Principal's Desk



Dear Parents and Guardians,

I hope each and every one of you are having a restful and enjoyable Christmas Holiday and are looking forward with hope and optimism as the New Year beckons.

As 2018 draws to a close I would like to thank all families for their generosity and support for all the fund raising events held on the run up to Christmas.



Classical Christmas Concert

What a pleasure it was to host our first ever Classical Christmas Concert on Sunday 2nd December in the Good Shepherd Church! It was a wonderful, festive occasion for friends and families of DLSC and the community of Churchtown. Heartfelt thanks to all the members of the Dublin Orchestral Players, the Rathfarnham Gospel Choir and the students and staff of the college who gave of their time to put on such a beautiful, professional performance. Also thank you to our Parents Association, 6th Year Prefects and the staff and students who were involved in organising the event and helping out on the day. A special word of thanks must also go to Fr Brian Edwards for giving us permission to host the event in the Church, which was just the perfect location for the Concert.

Christmas Fair 2018

We also hosted our Christmas Fair for the second year running on Sunday 9th December. Yet another great, fun, family occasion for all in DLSC and in the community! It was all hands on deck as the crowds descended to enjoy the games, the food, the different stalls, the raffles, the big Wheel of Fortune and Santa's Grotto. We were royally entertained by the Rathfarnham Ukulele Group Society (RUGS) and thank them for giving of their time to entertain the crowds and adding greatly to the Christmas atmosphere on the day.

A word of sincere appreciation to all our sponsors especially Supervalu Churchtown, The Glenside, Ivory Furniture and Bedding , Specsavers- Dundrum, Bijou Restaurant, Think Bike, John Reddy-Paint Box for all the promotional literature , Gertie's Kitchen and Jill Tyrell – Murrays Bar for providing the food and beverages on the day and the Walshes for providing the Pop Corn Machine. There were other local businesses who kindly donated prizes, just too many to list in this newsletter. We really appreciate and value their support, loyalty and kindness.

It really was a true Lasallian gathering, of students, teachers, parents, families, past pupils, neighbours, young and old enjoying a festive day out together. Winners of the Draw have been notified and are listed on our website. In the process, we managed to raise approximately €5500 between the two Christmas events. We look forward to using that money to forge ahead with our plan to continue to improve the school facilities and environment for our students.





Other Fund Raising Initiatives

Well done to all our students who organised and supported the different fund raising campaigns throughout the term. Many people in need will benefit from their hard work, generosity and funds raised.

- Trick or Treat for Temple Street Hospital
- 1st and 2nd Years - The Shoe Box Appeal for the Homeless in Dublin through the Carpuchin Centre
- Christmas Jumper Day in aid of St Vincent De Paul
- Transition Year - ISPCC Collection Day

Christmas Assemblies

Christmas Assemblies have been held with all year groups, in preparation for the Christmas Exams. Students were given exam schedules and reminded of Exam Protocols. Parents please note that the school uniform must be worn at all times during exam periods and that school rules continue to apply until the end of the exams. Attendance at exams is essential and students are not permitted to arrive late or cause disruption/ distraction. The exams are set up in a way to prepare the students for their State Exams, so rules must be strictly adhered to.

Student Progress System - Merit Award Ceremony

It always gives us pleasure to take the time at the end of each term to publicly acknowledge the positive contribution that so many students make in the college - whether it is their application to their studies, attention and contribution in class, making significant effort or improvement, helping out at school events, being supportive, kind, generous to others...etc. Over the course of this First Term many students received merit stamps and it was with pleasure that we awarded students Bronze, Silver and Gold Merit Badges at the Merit Ceremony. We want to congratulate students on their achievements and ask them to keep up the great work! For an explanation of our Merit System please read the De La Salle Progress System in the Student Journal.

Student Progress System - The Self Reflective Learner - Academic Progress Chart

This section of the Student Journal also has The Self Reflective Learner - Academic Progress Chart. Please read this section of the Journal and encourage your son to set targets in each of his subject areas and see that he monitors and charts his own progress throughout the term.

Christmas Reports

Christmas Exams ran smoothly this term and Student Reports will be available on VSware the week of 14th January. I will send a text to confirm the date.

Library & Clubs

Since my last newsletter we managed to complete the Library Wall and we are continuing to stock up on new books to keep the boys reading and improving their literacy skills. The Library has become a heart centre in the school and is packed out each day at break times. Chess Club is held at lunchtime on Monday through to Thursday, Friday is Scrabble Club Day and Homework Club is held in the Library after school every day. Music Club is held on Thursdays while Debating Club continues to flourish and is held in Ms O' Dwyer's Room on Tuesdays at lunchtime. Green Schools Committee and the Student Council meet alternate Mondays.



Literacy News

As part of our whole school initiative to promote reading and improve literacy, we want to remind students to always have a book in their bag to read. All First to Fourth Year students continue to engage with the Accelerated Reader Programme. Since September our boys have read over TWENTY MILLION words - an amazing achievement!! Prizes were given at our Merit Award Ceremony to the class and students who acquired the most points in the Accelerated Reader Programme this term. It all starts over in Term Two so once again I ask you to please encourage your son to put his phone away and to read for thirty minutes every day. Students will be retested before the end of the year to monitor their individual progress. We sent you information and videos about the ARP in September. Please contact the school if you are interested in learning more about this programme.

Study Skills – First Year Programme

A good homework and study routine is vital in order to ensure that your son reaches his potential academically. This term the AEN Team delivered 'Learn to Learn' workshops to First Year Students to enhance their study skills and to help them to prepare for their Christmas Exams. These workshops were a follow up to the Study Skills workshops that they completed during their Induction Week in August.

Study Skills – Second Year Programme

Second Year students are also engaged in a Study Skills Programme facilitated by the Sixth Year Prefects. This takes place every Monday and Thursday after school from 3.45-4.30. The students pick different subjects and work through a variety of study techniques with the Sixth Years. The Second Year students try the different techniques throughout the week and rate their effectiveness. The idea is to introduce the students to a variety of techniques and empower the students to choose those that best suit their style of learning. Twenty Second Year students have attended to date and by the end of the second term all Second Year students will have had the opportunity to engage in the programme. I want to thank the Prefects for the great work they are doing with the Second Years. I would also like to thank the Fifth Year Mentors who are helping students at After School Homework Clubs.



Year Heads are in the process of developing a comprehensive study skills programme for each year groups in the college. The programmes for First, Second and Third Years will complement and support the Study Skills Module which is taught to all Junior Cycle Students in the SPHE Wellbeing Programme. The Programmes for Senior Cycle students will complement what is taught through the Guidance Programme.

I would like to remind all parents and students that the Student Journal also has a Homework and Study Guide Section on page 44. Please read this section with your son and encourage him to develop a healthy homework and study regime.

Due to unforeseen circumstances we were unable to host an Information Night for Parents on the topics of the New Junior Cycle and Study Skills. We have plans to reschedule it in the New Year. Details and date to follow!

After School Study

I want to remind all families that we have extended the hours for After School Study, in order to facilitate students involved with team sports in the school and to provide students with as much time as possible to study and revise for their exams. The Study Hall is a warm, well lit, safe and supervised environment most conducive to learning. We strongly recommend all exam students to avail of this service as soon as possible in the new term. High academic results will be achieved with consistent hard work and revision. Students from all years can avail of this service.

- Monday 4pm -7pm
- Tuesday 4pm -7pm
- Wednesday 1.30pm -3.30pm
- Thursday 4pm -7pm
- Friday 4pm -7pm

Please contact Mr Forde /Ms Jordan for application forms.

AEN and Academic Tracking

In October, all First Year students completed the CAT4 ability test. They also completed the online New Group Reading Test in November. Results inform the AEN Department and Academic Tracking and in some cases helped students with their option subject choices on their return after Mid Term.

The testing and applications for Reasonable Accommodations for JC and LC is also completed.

The AEN team are continuing to work with the Year Heads to introduce Academic Tracking for each year group. Information on AEN of students is currently being added on to VShare.

AEN classes and support for students have been organised and timetabled. AEN support is offered in small groups, Team-Teaching, one-on-one support as appropriate. The AEN team have regular meetings with the SNA team and are in the process of compiling Student Support Files.

The Incoming First Year Entrance Assessment took place on the 17th November.

ICT

Last year as part of our Digital Strategy Plan, we renovated the Computer Room, improved cabling, internet access and installed 28 new computers for student use. TY and 1st year students also completed Microsoft Academy Courses.

This term we have appointed a new ICT Coordinator and have established a new ICT Committee who will work on developing the Digital Strategy for the College. We have installed a computer in every classroom and teachers have received introductory training in the use of VShare, Google Docs and Google Classroom.

Google Classroom facilitates paperless communication between teachers and students and streamlines educational workflow. It is a collaborative, digital platform which allows teachers to view and correct work in real-time. Teachers can create classes, post assignments, share resources, post homework tasks and study plans. Students can also work on Google Classroom together, at the same time. Work can be projected onto the white board to facilitate discussion. Students can also access Google Classroom at home.

This term The Academy of Code is providing training for TY students and students can also avail of their After School Coding Courses.

We are excited about all these new developments and plan to provide ongoing ICT inservice training for staff, continue to improve our ICT resources and to promote the use of ICT in the school to enhance the learning and teaching environment in every classroom.

Staff CPD

A core aspect of our plan to improve Learning and Teaching in DLSC is to ensure that staff continue to receive ongoing CPD. During this First Term teachers have completed the following:

- Learning and Teaching : Training in VSware, Google Docs, Google Classroom, Differentiation (24th August 2018)
- Learning and Teaching : Staff attended inservices for their second Junior Cycle Subject. (September 2018)
- Learning and Teaching: PDST -Differentiation (4th October)
- Learning and Teaching : Peer and Student Led Staff Inservice on The Growth Mindset (13th November and 16th November 2018)
- Learning and Teaching : The JCT Team provided Wholestaff Training on Wellbeing (16th November 2018)
- Learning and Teaching : Fire Safety , PDST- Differentiation and Team Teaching (7th December 2018)
- Learning and Teaching : Staff Completed the Tusla Certification in Child Protection
- SSE Coordinator – PDST School Self Evaluation Training Day
- ICT Coordinator – PDST ICT & Digital Strategy Training Day
- AEN Coordinator – NCTE Assessment and Planning Day
- 3 members of Staff – Le Chéile Middle Leadership Training
- 2 members of Staff - De La Salle Induction Training
- 2 members of Staff – Le Chéile Induction Training Day
- JMB Leadership Training - Principal and Deputy Principal
- PDST/NAPD Misneach Training - Principal
- JMB – Education Law Day – Deputy Principal

Transition Year

It has been a busy time for Transition Years. Students went on their Annual Retreat hosted by St Benildus Retreat Centre and the Mini Company Team was taken to an exhibition on Product Development. The students also took part in a number of interesting workshops and talks:

- Choose Safety –Young People at Work
- Shout Out – LGBTQ Issues
- John Lonergan Former Governor of Mountjoy

The Health and Fitness Module has been completed, with students taking part in Judo, Rock Climbing and Swimming. Students had their end of term review meetings with their Tutors and finished the Christmas term by going out into the city to fundraise for the ISPCC.

Sport Clubs

This term has seen an increase in the number of students getting involved in sport. They have been keeping fit and healthy and doing us proud with their commitment and involvement in the different sporting activities in the school.

Sports Club - Rugby

De La Salle College Churchtown Rugby is growing. This term we have seen more students wear the wine and gold and step onto a pitch, than we have in a considerable time. Our First Year Rugby side have played a host of games with a combination of wins and losses. On Friday the 25th of January we will host six other schools for a Leinster Rugby Blitz and look forward to fielding two teams. All of our First Years now play rugby twice a week and we are delighted to see so many of our students play a sport which means so much to the school but will also will mean so much to them.

Our Junior Rugby Team has also had a mix of results. Their Cup win against Coláiste Chill Mháintain was an excellent performance and they will now play in the Shield and New Year League with strong ambitions of success. Similarly, our Senior Rugby Team has had highs and lows with some great performances, of which an away win against Mount Temple deserves recognition. They will enter their Shield Competition after a narrow loss to Tullow CS in the Cup. Despite this, they too will equally aim to achieve success in their New Year League and Shield Competition doing the school proud and bringing themselves and the school forward. Rugby is alive and kicking, with more players stepping onto the pitch this year. We aim to grow the sport for our boys to learn the valuable lessons that it inherently holds.

At the beginning of March we will swap Rugby for Football for the remainder of the year and will begin the process of building up Football as a new sport in DLSC. Who knows we might even discover the next Damien Duff ! Watch this space!!



Sports Club – Basketball

Coach Cariltos is working hard to develop Basketball in DLSC. The club has grown in numbers and this year Cariltos has registered three teams (First Year, Second Year and Under 16) in the East League Division C. The Under 16s won their group and went on to finish in 3rd place in the Dublin Finals held just before Christmas. First and Second Years will be starting their league games in January.

Sports Club -Badminton

Our Badminton Club and Coach Ms Lynn Mc Crave are proud holders of the Badminton Ireland 2018 School of the Year Award. This season the 19A team will play in the Semi-Finals of the Dublin South League on the 10th January. The 19B Team were narrowly beaten in their section but tied matches along the way.

The 16A team are through to the Semi-Finals while the B, C and D teams are waiting on the section results along with the 14A and B League Teams. The 14As look poised for a Quarter-Final place having won their first three matches while the 14C are playing friendly matches. Badminton continues to grow from strength to strength with approximately sixty students in the club. We want to thank Supervalu for sponsoring our new Badminton T-Shirts.

Students have also been busy improving their **Squash** and **Table Tennis Skills** and have been involved in a number of inter-school competitions.

Committees

The Green School Committee have held regular meeting this term and are in the process of working for the second Green Energy Flag. Litter and Waste are still priority areas of concern and it is vitally important that all students use the correct bins in the school. The Committee is also promoting the use of reusable coffee cups and a school water bottle. This Committee will work closely with the Student Council and Prefects on all the Green School Initiatives.

The Student Council

The fifteen Council Members have been elected and have held a number of meetings this term. They had their first DLSC Student Clinic to get the students views about the school. Student voice is important to us and we are look forward to hearing their issues and ideas and to working in partnership to improve the school.

The Animation Team

The Animation Team consists of student and staff members who meet regularly throughout the year to discuss ways to promote and live out the Lasallian Ethos in the school.

Over Midterm, as part of our Assembly Hall refurbishment project, we designed a new school Lasallian Banner which is proudly displayed in our Assembly Hall.

The banner lists the 5 Core Principles of a Lasallian School



- 1. Concern for Social Justice**
- 2. Quality Education**
- 3. Respect for all Persons**
- 4. Faith in the Presence of God**
- 5. Inclusive Community**

This team has also put together a promotional video and powerpoint titled 'How would you know our school was Lasallian?' which I presented at the Worldwide Lasallian Leadership Conference in November. It will go up onto our website in the New Year.

The 2018-2019 Academic Year is a very special year for all De La Salle Schools around the World as we are celebrating the Tercentenary of the death of John Baptist De La Salle. There will be many Lasallian events hosted throughout the year, including a Pilgrimage to Knock in April. The Animation Team will be working with our students as they enter a National Lasallian Competition. The title of the Competition is:

John Baptist De La Salle 1719 – 2019 Then and Now

The Animation Team is also planning a week- long series of events culminating on De La Salle Day in May. It will be a very special week in the College. We will keep you informed of all events as the new term progresses.

Building Updates

In addition to the renovation of our Assembly Hall and the completion of our Library Wall, we also managed this term to renovate the Conference Room. It is currently in use

as a Multi Purpose/Student Support Room, where students can have small group work classes or one to one time and support with the AEN/SNA teams.

The plan to upgrade the Woodwork Room is well under way. This department is now well stocked with new benches, stools, band saws, lathe, drills, sand machine, hand tools and a computerised laser machine. We are looking forward to top class projects from all our Third and Sixth Year students this year!

Electrical upgrades in the main school building have been completed. Outside lighting and Floodlights have been repaired.

A Fire Safety Audit has been completed and fire safety equipment updated and replaced. Staff received training on how to use the fire safety equipment.

Rule Reminders

As we begin the New Year I want to remind students and parents that the school rules as listed in the Student Journal **MUST** be signed by both student and parents/guardians. Students must wear the full uniform and this includes **the school jacket and black leather shoes**. All students have had plenty of time to invest in the school jacket. Please contact Keith Ward on 0831857315. The school reserves the right to confiscate non-uniform items. Parents may collect items from your son's Year Head. Please ensure your son has full attendance and arrives on time for school. Students do not have the right to disturb the learning and teaching environment.

The Parents' Association

I would like to extend huge thanks to all the members of the Parents' Association, for their positivity, dedication and constant support and for all the incredible work they do in the school. As you know they usually meet one a month and so far this year they have been involved in planning, organising and helping out at the following events:

- The AGM
- The First Year Information and Social Evening
- Debs Reception
- Open Day
- Fund Raising Bag-Packing Event in Supervalu
- Christmas Classical Concert
- Christmas Fair

The Parents' Association also play a crucial role in helping to improve Learning and Teaching and is a key partner in the review and development of School Policies. The PA is looking for new members who are willing to give a small amount of time to attend a

meeting to find out more about the vital role they play in the development of our school. Please contact Reception for more details.

School/Home Communication

We are doing our best to improve school/home communication. This Christmas Newsletter is the second newsletter of the year. Please let Reception know if you did not receive a copy of the Midterm Newsletter. I also hope you enjoyed reading our Student Publication - Sallemanac – a School Magazine which was emailed to all families earlier this month. Well done to the TY team who put it together.

By now all families should have usernames and passwords for VSware to access your son's school reports and profile of attendance and behaviour. **The school must have up-to-date addresses, mobile numbers and email addresses** as we regularly text and email you throughout the year. Please contact your son's Year Head if there are any problems with these forms of communication. Remember that any contact we make with you is in the best interest of your son. We want the very best for all our students and want them to reach their full potential. We value your support and cooperation and want to work in partnership with you to create the very best educational environment for your son. I will be in contact later in the term to ask for your views as we progress our School Improvement Plan. Your voice is also important to us.

For ongoing up to date information on what is happening in the College please follow our Twitter page **@DeLaSalleCtown**. This is updated on a regular basis and captures the many activities and events that take place in DLSC throughout year. We will also keep you informed about our plan to upgrade the school website www.delasallecollege.com so that it will be more practical, functional and user friendly.

Dates for your Diary

- Thursday 10th January - CAO Night for 6th Year Students and Parents
- Tuesday 22nd January - Fifth Year Parent Teacher Meeting-
- Thursday 31st January -First Year Parent Teacher Meeting -
- Monday 11th February -JCT Cluster Training Day for Staff rescheduled (Monday 1st April Cancelled)
- Tuesday 19th March – TY Subject Choice Information Night

Finally I want to end this Newsletter by wishing you all a very happy, healthy and successful 2019 and I hope it is a great one for all the students and staff in De La Salle College Churchtown.

Enjoy the rest of the holidays!

Yours sincerely,

Siobhán Foster

Principal

Happy
New Year